Imposition of tariff on Indian Steel Imports by USA

836. SHRI K. R. MALKANI: Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that USA has imposed heavy tariff on Indian steel imports as reported in the Economic Times, dated 6-2-1995,

(b) if so, whether this is a violation of the letter and spirit of World Trade Organisation; and

(c) what action Government propose to take in the matter?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE (SHRI P. CHIDAMBARAM): (a) USA has imposed anti-dumping duties ranging from 3.8 per cent to 21.02 per cent on individual companies exporting stainless steel bars from India to USA.

(b) No, Sir.

(c) As a matter of practice, Govt. extends technical assistance, to the extent possible, to individual imports facing anti-dumping actions.

Lifting of ban on import of swiss watches

837. SHRI K. P. MALKANI: Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to tate:

(a) whether it is a fact that Government has assured the Swiss Vice-President that the ban on import of Swiss vatches will seen be lifted in India as eported in the Hindustan Times of 8th 'ebruary, 1996: and

(b) whetser Government has studied he impact this will have on Indian Watch ndustry especially HMT?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE HE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE SHRI P CHIDAMBARAM): (a) o, Sir.

(b) Does not arise.

Loss of zero duty generalised scheme of proference

838. SHRI K. R. MALKANI: Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a act that with effect from January 1, 1995, India has lost the zero duty generalised scheme of preference enjoyed by it on the basis of exports from developing countries to developed countries of the European Union, and if so, the reasons therefor;

(b) in what manner this policy will affect our evxports to European Union countries; and

(c) what steps Government have taken to restore the status quo ante?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE (SHRI P. CHIDAMBARAM): (a) to (c) The BU's erstwhile GSP scheme provided for zero tariffs but access was circumscribed by quotas and ceilings. Admissible products from developing countries have been classified into categories of "very sensitive" (85 per cent of the MFN tariff), "sentitive" (70 per cent of the MFN tariff) "semi-sensitive" (35 percent of the MFN tariff) and "non-sensitive" (zero tariff). However, all admissible products from least developed countries will continue to enter the FN at zero tariff.

The impact of the EU's new Scheme on our exports will be moderated by the fact affected. Further, developing countries with per capta incomes exceding 6000 dollars will not be extended GSP benefits with effect from 1 January 1996.

The GSP is a non-contractual instrument by which industrialized countries unilaterally extend tariff concessions to developing countries. While the EU's latest sceseme was being formulated a number of suggestions were made by several beneficiary countries, including India. The scheme has been autonomously recast by the EU.